

## Message Text

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21

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01 INR-05 L-01

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-20 OMB-01

AID-05 SY-04 SCCT-01 USSS-00 NIC-01 SAB-01 SAM-01

NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 DRC-01 /066 W

----- 107752

O 121042Z OCT 74

FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 755

INFO AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY AMMAN IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE

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EO 11652: DECON 10/12/75

TAGS: ASEC PINS LE US

SUBJ: BOMB EXPLOSION AT CHICAGO NATIONAL BANK IN BEIRUT

1. LARGE BOMB WENT OFF AT APPROXIMATELY 2035 LOCAL OCT 11 AT OFFICES OF FIRST NATIONAL BANK OF CHICAGO (FNBC) ON BEIRUT'S FASHIONABLE HAMRA STREET. NO ONE WAS INJURED, WHICH SEEMS MIRACLE IN VIEW FACT THAT BANK OCCUPIES SECOND AND THIRD FLOORS OF LARGE APARTMENT BUILDING OVERLOOKING ONE OF BEIRUT'S BUSIEST SHOPPING AND CINEMA THOROUGHFARES.

2. ACCORDING TO ZIAD IDILBY, FNBC VICE PRESIDENT FOR MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA, FOUR-KILO PLASTIQUE CHARGE WAS PLACED JUST OUTSIDE BAN'S FRONT DOOR ON SECOND FLOOR. DAMAGE TO BANK'S INTERIOR AND ACCESS-HALLWAY IS EXTENSIVE AND WILL TAKE ESTIMATED SIX WEEKS TO REPAIR. FORTUNATELY, FNBC HAD CENTRALIZED ITS RECORDS AND ITS HAMRA-BRANCH BUSINESS CAN THEREFORE BE HANDLED BY CENTRAL OFFICE IN ANOTHER SECTION OF CITY.

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3. BOTH IDILBY AND BEIRUT POLICE CHIEF SAY LETTER WAS FOUND AT SCENE, SIGNED BY SO-CALLED "ARAB COMMUNIST ORGANIZATION", STATING THAT BOMB EXPLOSION WAS IN HONOR OF ADIL ABU ASSI, MEMBER OF SHIBBU GANG WHO CURRENTLY IN GOL CUSTODY UNDER DEATH SENTENCE FOR HIS PART IN OCT 1973 TERRORIST ATTACK ON BANK OF AMERICA HERE (BEIRUT 9388). LETTER REFERRED TO OCT 10 BOMB BLAST AT NATIONAL CASH REGISTER OFFICE IN DAMASCUS, SPECIFICALLY MENTIONED FNBC, AND DESCRIBED FNBC EXPLOSION AS CONTINUATION OF ACTIVITY DESIGNED TO "WARN" IMPERIALISTS, COLONIALISTS, ETC. LETTER, DATED OCT 11, ALSO STATED THAT FNBC BLAST WAS AIMED AT "LIBERATING" LEBANON'S AKKAR, BEKAA AND SOUTHERN PROVINCES.

4. ACCORDING TO IDILBY, LEBANESE POLICE ARRIVED ON SCENE PROMPTLY FOLLOWING FNBC EXPLOSION AND ARE BEING COOPERATIVE. BUILDING PRESENTLY UNDER POLICE GUARD, AND ONLY TENANTS BEING PERMITTED TO ENTER. IDILBY, WHOSE RETURN LAST NIGHT FROM TRIP TO LONDON COINCIDED WITH FNBC EXPLOSION HERE, HAS TAKEN THE ACTION CALMLY AND PHILOSOPHICALLY. WE OFFERED ASSISTANCE, BUT HE INDICATED HE DID NOT NEED ANY FOR TIME BEING.

5. AMBASSADOR ALSO DISCUSSED INCIDENT OCT 12 IN MEETING ON OTHER MATTER WITH PRESIDENT'S CHEF DU CABINET WHO DISTRESSED, PROMISED LOOK INTO MATTER AND KEEP US INFORMED ANY DEVELOPMENTS.

6. COMMENT: WOULD APPEAR THAT PERPETRATORS OF THIS LATEST BOMBING ACT ARE FROM SAME GROUP WHICH HAS CLAIMED RESPONSIBILITY FOR RECENT SIMILAR ACTIONS IN DAMASCUS (DAMASCUS 2297). FACT THAT LETTER LEFT AT SCENE SPECIFICALLY MENTIONS ABU ASSI AND SHIBBU GANG WOULD ALSO APPEAR TO INDICATE SOME CONNECTION BETWEEN "ARAB COMMUNIST ORGANIZATION" AND PERSONS RESPONSIBLE FOR BANK OF AMERICA ATTACK AND POSSIBLY SUBSEQUENT BOMB ATTACKS AGAINST US INSTALLATIONS IN LEBANON (BEIRUT 10444). WE ARE FOLLOWING UP FNBC EXPLOSION WITH LEBANESE INTERNAL SECURITY OFFICIALS AND WILL REPORT FURTHER DETAILS AS THEIR INVESTIGATION PROCEEDS.

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GODLEY

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NNN

## Message Attributes

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**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
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**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
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**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** shawdg  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
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**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
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**Review Authority:** shawdg  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 26 JUN 2002  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <26 JUN 2002 by martinml>; APPROVED <18 MAR 2003 by shawdg>  
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**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
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**TAGS:** ASEC, PINS, LE, US, FIRST NATIONAL BANK OF CHICAGO  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005